Mannfacture of inferior types of T.V. sets

1329. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to reports of activities of some dealers engaged in supplying inferior types of T.V. sets under well known brands and deceiving the customers; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to check the activities of such dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Government have seen Press report alleging spurious manufacture of TV sets being sold under well-known brand names and cheating the innocent consumers.

(b) Secretary, Department of Electronics, has discussed this with the Representatives of the Indian Television Manufacturers Association (ITMA) and has requested them to indicate specific cases. These will then be taken up with appropriate authorities, including the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration, for necessary action.

Loss of agriculture and Forest land due to degradation

1330. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated areas of wasteland in the various parts of the country State-wise and how much on an average, good agriculture and forest land are lost annually due to degradation;

(b) what are the main factors contributing to the degradation of land resources in the country; and

(c) what are the details of the programmes undertaken by Government to save the land resources from degradation during the last three years and the results achieved and the expenditure incurred in the implementation of the said programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) There is no comprehensive survey for the country as a whole to provide a precise assessment of wastelands. According to information given in some reports, including that of the National Commission of Agriculture (1976), an overall estimate is that an area of about 175 million hectares in the country is affected by the problem of soil erosion and land degradation. The State-wise break up of 129.58 million hectares as furnished by the Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development (SPWD) is attached at Statement-I (*See* below).

As regards forest land, according to the data collected by National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) from Landsat Imagery, the area with more than 10 per cent tree cover declined from 55 million to 46 million hectares between 1972—75 and 1980—82. This shows that the annual rate of loss of forest cover is about 1.5 million hectares.

There is no firm data regarding loss of good agricultural land due to degradation.

(b) Land degradation occurs due to a variety of causes like unscientific management of land and water resources, poor drainage, unplanned-road building, seepage from large canal projects, causing waterlogging and salinity. A very low level of stall feeding leads to overgrazing and consequent degradation of land.

(c) The Government of India set up in 1985 a National Landuse and Wastelands Development Council with two separate bodies under it—the Na-